

JUSTUS TOWNSEND.

JUNE 3, 1898.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. WARNER, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 9018.]

The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 9018) granting a pension to Justus Townsend, have examined the same and all the evidence and respectfully report:

This bill proposes to pension at \$12 per month Justus Townsend, of Springfield, Ill., who served as an acting assistant or contract surgeon, United States Army, from May 1 to November 15, 1862, and from November 21, 1862, to July 20, 1863, and from August 17, 1863, to October 24, 1863, his service being honorably terminated in each instance.

August 26, 1896, he filed a claim under the act of June 27, 1890, but it was rejected September 4, 1896, on the ground that there was "No title under act of June 27, 1890. Claimant was never enrolled or mustered into the United States service, as shown by the records of the War Department."

This committee has repeatedly held in bills of this character that the service rendered is of a character entitling to pension under the act of June 27, 1890, and in this position has been sustained by the House, the Senate, and the President.

The following letter filed with this committee by Mr. Connolly, who introduced the bill, shows the present physical and financial condition of the claimant:

THE COMMITTEE ON INVALID PENSIONS:

Concerning H. R. 9018: I beg to say I know Dr. Justus Townsend very well. He has long lived in my city, Springfield, Ill. I know he served as an acting assistant surgeon of the United States Army during the war of the rebellion. He is now very poor, having absolutely nothing to live on and being totally unable to practice his profession or do any kind of labor or business. He is dependent on charity for his support. He, while able, did an extensive practice, but his extreme charity toward his patients prevented him from ever receiving any pay except such as they voluntarily chose to pay him. He was very peculiar in that respect. He has always been a man of most exemplary habits, and in every way a model citizen. He is scarcely able now to get about the house, and certainly can not live much longer. From his appearance and very feeble condition one would suppose him to be 90 years of age, but I believe he is only 68 or 69 years old.

He called at my office last summer to see me about a pension. Hearing a noise on the landing halfway up my office stairs, I looked out and found the doctor there stooping down, leaning his hands on the steps, and breathing so hard I feared he was about to die. I got a couple of colored men to carry him up into the office and lay him on a lounge, where he recovered, after resting about fifteen minutes, and became able to talk with me about his pension.

I saw he was unable to walk down the stairs and had him carried down and sent him home in a carriage. His is the most pitiable pension case that has ever happened to come under my personal notice.

He is loved by his brother physicians and by all who know him. His days are short and his necessities very great.

JAMES A. CONNOLLY, M. C.

The bill is meritorious, and it is recommended that it pass when amended as follows:

Line 3, after "Interior," insert "be, and he hereby."

Amend the title so as to read: "A bill granting a pension to Justus Townsend."

RECORD AND PENSION OFFICE, WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington City, March 7, 1898.

SIR: In response to the request contained in your letter of the 5th instant, received to-day, I have the honor to inform you that the official records show that Justus Townsend served under contract with the United States as acting assistant surgeon, United States Army (contract surgeon), as follows: May 1, 1862, to November 15, 1862, with the First Dakota Cavalry; November, 1862, to January 21, 1863, at Fort Randall, Dak.; January 21, 1863, to July 21, 1863, at Fort Pierre, Dak., and August 17, 1863, to October 24, 1863, at Fort Randall, Dak.

Very respectfully,

F. C. AINSWORTH,

Colonel, United States Army, Chief Record and Pension Office.

Hon. JAMES A. CONNOLLY,
House of Representatives.

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., *March 12, 1898.*

SIR: I am well acquainted with Dr. Townsend, and have known him for the past twenty years. His present physical condition, brought about by an illness in the summer of 1896, is such that he is wholly incapacitated for any or all of the duties required of him in the pursuit of his profession. He is unable to get about without assistance on account of paresis of the lower extremities, besides having failed mentally since the attack before mentioned. Dr. Townsend's financial condition is such as would urge the necessity of aid from some source, he having no children or any near relative known to me, from which he could demand or expect assistance. I have known Dr. Townsend to be an industrious, intelligent, active, and charitable physician, and his present dependent condition is largely due to his charity to his patients.

O. B. BABCOCK, M. D.

The COMMISSIONER OF PENSIONS.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, by O. B. Babcock, M. D., at Springfield, this 12th day of March, 1897.

[SEAL.]

H. F. DORWIN, *Notary Public.*

ILLINOIS STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY,
Springfield, Ill., March 12, 1898.

The COMMISSIONER OF PENSIONS:

This will certify that in July and August, 1896, I attended Dr. Justus Townsend for an attack of kidney disease and general nervous breakdown, and that I have been familiar with his case before and since that date. He is now in a practically helpless condition, unable to pursue his avocation, and without any means of subsistence. His physical condition is the result of his kidney and heart disease. His age is nearly 70 years. His property holding is nil, due to his poor collecting qualities. He did a large practice for many years, and has been one of our most honorable and deserving citizens. No statement which I could make would give an adequate idea of his helpless physical and financial condition, but I know him to be deserving, worthy, and honorable.

Respectfully,

GEO. N. KREIDER, M. D.

Subscribed and sworn to before me by George N. Kreider, M. D., at Springfield, this 12th day of March, 1898.

[SEAL.]

H. F. DORWIN, *Notary Public.*